

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

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USIA-15 AID-20 OMB-01 DRC-01 /117 W

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6260

INFO USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 3092

USCINCSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PGOV, AR

SUBJECT: ELECTION OF CONGRESSIONAL OFFICERS

REF BA 2666, BA 2947

1. SUMMARY. JOSE ANTONIO ALLENDE (PPC) WAS FORMALLY ELECTED PROVISIONAL PRESIDENT OF SENATE APRIL 26. HIS CANDIDACY WAS SUPPORTED BY ALL PARTIES AND REFLECTS PERON'S EFFORTS TO STRESS BROAD NATIONAL CONSENSUS RATHER THAN PERONIST POWER. END SUMMARY

2. ELECTIONS IN THE SENATE APRIL 26 CONFIRMED SLATE INDICATED IN REFTELS. RAUL LASTIRI REMAINS PRESIDENT OF CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES, WITH SALVADOR BUSACCA (PPC) AS FIRST VICE PRESIDENT, ISIDRO ODENA (MID) WAS REPLACED AS SECOND VICE PRESIDENT OF CHAMBER, BUT SINCE HIS REPLACEMENT, ANTONIO PEREIRA, ALSO REPRESENTS MID (AND EVEN SAME FACTION WITHIN MID), HIS REMOVAL HAD LITTLE POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE. IN INTERESTING GESTURE SYMBOLIZING SPIRIT OF CONSENSUS IN CHAMBER, RAUL LASTIRI VOTED FOR UCR BLOC-LEADER ANTONIO TROCCOLI AS PRESIDENT.

3. ALLENDE WAS UNANIMOUSLY ELECTED, WITH EXCEPTION OF HIS
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OWN VOTE, WHICH HE DID NOT CAST FOR HIMSELF. UCR
BLOC-LEADER PERETTE EXPRESSED GREAT SATISFACTION OVER

CHOICE OF ALLENDE. SOME PERONISTS, ESPECIALLY THOSE AROUND JOSE H. MARTIARENA, WHO BADLY WANTED THE JOB, ARE DOUBTLESS DISAPPOINTED AND SOMEWHAT MIFFED. SEVERAL MODERATE PERONISTS WITH WHOM EMBASSY HAS BEEN IN CONTACT, HOWEVER, HAVE EXPRESSED APPROVAL OF ALLENDE'S ELECTION TO PROVISIONAL PRESIDENCY OF SENATE AND INDICATED THAT IT IS IN KEEPING WITH PERON'S "NATIONAL CONSENSUS" POLICY WHICH THEY STRONGLY ENDORSE.

4. CLEARLY, ERON CHOSE ALLENDE AS PART OF HIS EFFORT TO CUT ACROSS PARTISAN LINES--AN EFFORT EXEMPLIFIED BY HIS ONGOING DIALOGUE WITH THE OTHER PARTIES.

5. ANOTHER INTERESTING ASPECT OF ALLENDE'S ELECTION IS HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH MARIA ESTELA MARTINEZ DE PERON. AS ACTING PROVISIONAL PRESIDENT OF SENATE, HE FIRST BEGAN TO ADVISE HER ON MATTERS RELATING TO SENATE, OF WHICH SHE IS PRESIDENT. THIS SUBSEQUENTLY EXPANDED INTO ROLE OF ADVISOR ON MUCH WIDER RANGE OF SUBJECTS. SHE SAID TO HAVE DEVELOPED GREAT CONFIDENCE IN ALLENDE. MARIA ESTELA PRESIDED AT APRIL 26 SESSION AND PERSONALLY CONFIRMED PROVISIONAL PRESIDENCY UPON ALLENDE. ONE SOURCE WHO WAS PRESENT AT SESSION SAID MARIA ESTELA WAS OBVIOUSLY EXTREMELY PLEASED WITH ALLENDE'S ELECTION AND SHOWED IT AS SHE CONFIRMED HIM IN HIS NEW OFFICE.

6. COMMENT. IF MARIA ESTELA IS IN FACT TAKING ADVICE THESE DAYS MORE FROM ALLENDE AND LASTIRI (SEE BA 2666) THAN FROM LOPEZ REGA, THIS IS A VERY ENCOURAGING DEVELOPMENT.
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